

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 11870 061427Z

41

ACTION SWF-02

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 11870

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAGR, FAO, IN

SUBJECT: WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE

1. I MET THIS MORNING WITH ACTING AGRICULTURAL MINISTER C. SUBRAMANIAN TO TALK GENERALLY OF FOOD MATTERS. HE BEGAN BY RAISING THE SUBJECT OF THE FOOD CONFERENCE. HE ASKED WHAT THE UNITED STATES HAD HAD IN MIND IN CALLING THE CONFERENCE. I SAID THAT WASHINGTON WAS SURE, AT THIS POINT, TO BE DIVIDED BETWEEN A RATHER SMALL NUMBER OF PERSONS WHO SAY THEY DON'T WANT TO GIVE FOOD AID TO THE DEVELOPING NATIONS, BUT DO, AND A RATHER LARGE NUMBER WHO SAY THEY DO, BUT DON'T. I SAID THE ORIGINS OF THIS DICHOTOMY WERE OBSCURE, BUT ITS WORKADAY MANIFESTATIONS WOULD BE NOT UNFAMILIAR TO A MEMBER OF THE CONGRESS PARTY. I CALLED ATTENTION TO THE SECRETARY'S APRIL SPEECH TO THE UN WHERE HE SAID "THE GREAT ISSUE OF DEVELOPMENT CAN NO LONGER BE REALISTICALLY PERCEIVED IN TERMS OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE HAVES AND THE HAVE NOTS ..." I SAID I ASSUMED THE CONFERENCE WOULD NONETHELESS ASSUME THAT FORMAT, ESPECIALLY IN THE CLOSE AFTERMATH OF THE BUCHAREST CONFERENCE. I SAID THAT THE PROBLEM WITH THE CONFRONTATION TYPE CONFERENCE IS THAT IT PROVIDED

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PAGE 02 NEW DE 11870 061427Z

TRUELY EXCESSIVE REWARDS FOR LYING, AS WITNESS

BUCHAREST. WAS THERE NOT, THEN, SOMETHING INDIA MIGHT WANT TO SEE COME OUT OF THE CONFERENCE OTHER THAN THE NOW ROUTINE FORMULATION THAT THE RICH ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONDITION OF THE POOR?

2. THE MINISTER HAD EVIDENTLY GIVEN SOME THOUGHT TO THE MATTER. HE HAD FIVE MEASURES TO PROPOSE, ALL UNDER THE HEADING OF MOBILIZING INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY OVER THE NEXT TEN YEARS TO ESTABLISH THE BASIS FOR SELF SUFFICIENCY IN COUNTRIES SUCH AS INDIA. HE SPOKE INTELLIGENTLY ABOUT THE PROBLEMS OF PRESTIGE IN SCIENCE, AND RATHER CANDIDLY ABOUT THE DECREE TO WHICH THE MOMENTUM OF INDIAN AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY HAD BEEN LOST OWING TO A GREAT FALL OFF IN COLLABORATION WITH THE AMERICANS AND THE CONSEQUENT LACK OF THE SCIENCE FACILITIES THAT USED TO ACCOMPANY THAT COLLABORATION. HIS FIVE SUBJECTS ARE, FIRST, SEED RESERVES ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN FOOD RESERVES, AND THAT GENETIC RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT MUST BE MAINTAINED. SECOND, THE TECHNOLOGY HAD TO BE DEVELOPED FOR MAKING FULL USE OF THE ORGANIC FERTILIZERS AVAILABLE IN A COUNTRY. THIRD, PLANT PROTECTION MEASURES NEEDED TO BE FURTHER DEVELOPED. FOURTH, WATER-SOIL MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES NEED TO BE ADVANCED. FIFTH, POST HARVEST TECHNOLOGIES ARE REQUIRED TO CUT DOWN THE LARGE LOSSES ASSOCIATED WITH PRESENT PRACTICES.
MOYNIHAN

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